

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ATHENS 01132 052203Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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AMCONSUL THESSALONIKI

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TAGS: PFOR EEC GR

SUBJECT: GREEK-EC RELATIONS: THE TEMPEST SUBSIDES

REF: A. ATHENS 1011; B. ATHENS 1000; C. ATHENS 979;

D. EC BRUSSELS 2218; E. EC BRUSSELS 981

SUMMARY: THE EMOTIONAL FUROR STIMULATED BY THE EC COMMISSION'S
OPINION ON THE GREEK APPLICATION FOR EC ENTRY HAS SUBSIDED,
LARGELY DUE TO GOVERNMENT STATEMENTS EMANATING FROM BONN AND
PARIS WHICH EVIDENCED SYMPATHY AND SUPPORT FOR THE GOG. SOME
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PAGE 02 ATHENS 01132 052203Z

RETURN OF CONFIDENCE IS APPARENT. AT THE SAME TIME, HOWEVER,

SKEPTICISM ABOUT THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE EVENTUAL NEGOTIATING TERMS WHICH WILL BE APPROVED BY THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS REMAINS. WE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY SEE A REDOUBLED LOBBYING EFFORT BY THE GOG IN THE WEEKS TO COME. FOR THE MOMENT, AT LEAST, THE US IS OFF CENTER STAGE ON THIS ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE TEMPEST BROUGHT ON BY THE RECOMMENDATIONS IN THE EC COMMISSION'S OPINION ON GREEK ACCESSION TO THE EC (REF A) HAS ABATED TO A LARGE DEGREE IN THE PAST FEW DAYS. THIS WAS PRIMARILY DUE TO EVENTS IN THREE OTHER EUROPEAN CAPITALS. THE FIRST WAS A FEBRUARY 2 STATEMENT IN BONN BY THE WEST GERMAN AND DUTCH FOREIGN MINISTERS, GENSCHER AND VAN DER STOEL. ACCORDING TO LOCAL REPORTS, THE MINISTERS EMPHASIZED THEIR GOVERNMENT'S "SERIOUS DESIRE TO FACILITATE GREECE'S ENTRY"; ADVOCATED AN EARLY START IN THE NEGOTIATIONS SUGGESTED THAT GREECE'S ENTRY SHOULD BE NEGOTIATED IN THE SAME MANNER AS THAT OF BRITAIN, DENMARK AND IRELAND; AND DENIED THAT THE COMMUNITY MEMBER STATES LINKED THE QUESTION OF GREECE'S ENTRY WITH POLITICAL QUESTIONS. SECOND, THE LOCAL PRESS ON FEBRUARY 4. QUOTED FROM THE FINANCIAL TIMES A DENIAL BY COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SIR CHRISTOPHER SOAMES THAT EC MEMBERSHIP WAS LINKED TO NATO OR GREECE'S RELATIONS WITH TURKEY.

2. CLEARLY THE GREATEST IMPACT, HOWEVER, WAS MADE BY THE OFFICIAL STATEMENT ISSUED IN PARIS FOLLOWING THE FEBRUARY 4 MEETING OF THE FRENCH CABINET. THE STATEMENT, AS QUOTED FOR GREECE'S CANDIDACY; UNDERLINED THAT THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS ALONE WILL DECIDE THE GREEK ISSUE; REGRETTED THE COMMISSION'S PUBLIC PRESENTATION OF POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS OUTSIDE ITS COMPETENCE; AND EXPRESSED THE CONVICTION THAT THE COMMUNITY CAN FIND SOLUTIONS TO THE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS RELATING TO GREEK MEMBERSHIP. ALTHOUGH SOME ATTACKS CONTINUED IN THE FEBRUARY 5 MEDIA FROM EXTREMES OF THE LEFT AND RIGHT, THE MORE MODERATE PRESS (WHICH HAD ALREADY TONED DOWN SOMEWHAT ITS INITIAL HYSTERICAL TONE) ABANDONED ACCUSATIONS OF WESTERN BLACKMAIL AND PERFIDY TO APPLAUD FRENCH SUPPORT.

3. MANY GREEKS NOW SEEM TO HAVE RENEWED CONFIDENCE THAT THE EC COUNCIL OF MINISTERS WILL ACT POSITIVELY, AND REASONABLY QUICKLY IN ITS CONSIDERATION OF THE GREEK ACCESSION
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PAGE 03 ATHENS 01132 052203Z

APPLICATION. A KEY MINISTRY OF COORDINATION OFFICIAL FOR EC AFFAIRS PREDICTS THAT THE COUNCIL WILL GIVE THE GREEN LIGHT FOR NEGOTIATIONS TOWARDS FULL MEMBERSHIP BY APRIL, AND THAT SERIOUS TALKS WILL COMMENCE THIS FALL. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME OFFICIALS OBSERVE THAT THE GERMAN DUTCH AND FRENCH STATEMENTS ARE VERY CAREFULLY WORDED; THAT COUNCIL DECISIONS MUST BE UNANIMOUS; AND THAT IT IS ALTOGETHER POSSIBLE THAT THE RESULT OF THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS DELIBERATIONS

WILL BE A COMPROMIS SOLUTION, ESSENTIALLY BASED ON THE COMMISSION'S REPORT. LATTER EVENTUALITY RAISES THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE GOG WOULD FIND A "PRE-ACCESSION PHASE" WITH A DIFFERENT LABEL (FOR EXAMPLE THE FOUR TO FIVE YEARS OF NEGOTIATIONS SUGGESTED IN REF D) ACCEPTABLE FROM POINT OF VIEW OF DOMESTIC POLITICS.

4. COMMON MARKET RELATIONS WILL REMAIN A KEY ISSUE HERE IN WEEKS TO COME, AND THE GOG WILL UNDOUBTEDLY PRESS AHEAD WITH AN ENERGETIC LOBBYING EFFORT IN EC CAPITALS DURING THIS TIME FRAME. GIVEN THE APPARENT GREEK INFLEXIBILITY ON THE DESIRE FOR EARLY ACCESSION (WHICH SOME GREEKS FEEL SHOULD BE BY 1978 AND OTHERS BY 1979), EC COUNCIL DECISION WILL DETERMINE WHETHER THE STORM IS OVER IN GREECE, OF IF THIS IS ONLY THE EYE OF THE HURRICANE.

5. MOST PAPERS CARRIED, WITHOUT COMMENT, THE EMBASSY'S BRIEF STATEMENT DENYING ANY US ROLE IN THE EC PROCEEDINGS ON GREEK ACCESSION (REF B). FOR THE MOMENT, AT LEAST, THE FOCUS IS OFF THE US ON THIS ISSUE. KUBISCH

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